

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-21 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Noh (U.S. Patent No. 5,946,420) in view of Ancin (U.S. Patent No. 6,227,725). The examiner has maintained the same rejection as that expressed in the first office action, but has not rejected the arguments made in response to that initial rejection. The applicant argued that the axes described in the claims are not equivalent to the "peaks" and "troughs" described in the prior art references, however the examiner noted that the specification of the present invention describes "ridges" and "valleys" in detail, but the "axes" are not specifically described. Accordingly, applicant has amended all claims to describe ridges and valleys rather than axes. Furthermore, claim 22 has been added with an additional limitation requiring that the intensity curve be calculated by solving for the eigenvalues of a Hessian matrix, which is not found in the prior art. The applicant assumes that these amendments will bring the claims into condition for allowance.

Regarding claim 1, claim 1 has been amended to include the limitation of "identifying ... a stroke valley or stroke ridge," which is not disclosed in the prior art. The peaks and troughs disclosed in Noh are related directly to text edges, not stroke valleys or ridges as explained in the response to the first office action. The prior art including Noh and Ancin does not disclose identification of stroke ridges or valleys at the interior of the character stroke.

Claims 2-6 have been canceled.

Claims 7-9 are dependent on claim 1 and are allowable for the reasons stated in relation to claim 1.

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Claim 10 has been amended to include the limitation of processing said image to identify ... a stroke valley or a stroke ridge.” This limitation is not found in the prior art as explained with respect to this limitation in claim 1.

Claims 11 & 12 have been canceled.

Claim 13 is dependent on claim 10 and is allowable for the reasons stated in relation to claim 10.

Claim 14 has been amended to include the limitation of “identifying one of a ridge or a valley.” This limitation is not found in the prior art.

Claim 15 has been amended to include the limitation of “processing said image to identify one of a ridge or a valley” This limitation is not found in the prior art.

Claim 16 and dependent claim 17 have been amended to include the limitation of “an intensity curvature analyzer for determining the presence of geometric intensity curvature features consisting of a ridge or a valley.” This limitation is not found in the prior art.

Claim 18 and dependent claims 19 and 20 have been amended to include the limitation of “identifying a geometric intensity curvature feature consisting of a ridge or a valley.” This limitation is not found in the prior art.

Claim 21 has been canceled.

Claim 22 has been added to further distinguish from the prior art. Claim 22 contains the limitation of “identifying ... a stroke valley or a stroke ridge,” which is not found in the prior art,

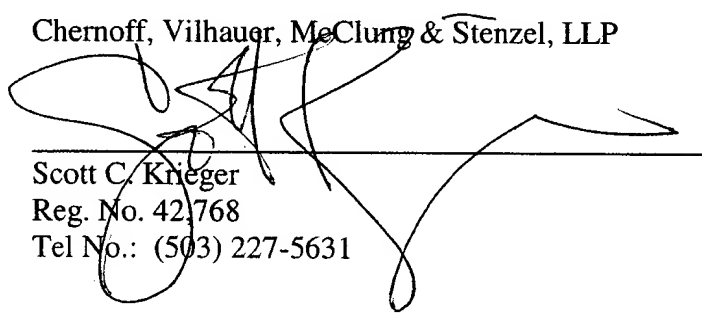
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as well as the limitation "wherein said curvature of the intensity curve is calculated by solving for the eigenvalues of a Hessian matrix." Neither of these limitations is found in the prior art.

Accordingly, these claims are thought to be placed in condition for allowance and the applicant respectfully requests that the examiner allow these claims as amended. The examiner is invited to telephone applicant's attorney at any time to help resolve the issues in this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop A F, Commissioner for Patents, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

Dated: June 15, 2004.

Scott C. Krieger

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott C. Krieger", written over a horizontal line.